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BC Stats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca | *Issue: 10-19* | *May 14, 2010*

- **BC exports climb 1.5% in March**
- **April ushers in 13.7% jump in housings starts**
- **85% of British Columbians use the Internet in 2009**

Exports

- **The value of British Columbia's exports rose 1.5% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March.** This increase was largely due to a 5.8% jump in industrial and consumer goods shipped, with machinery & equipment and automobile exports responsible for the balance of the expansion. Shipments of forestry products stalled in March after rising in each of the five previous months.

  Exports to the US were up 2.7%, an increase that was almost entirely the result of a surge (+27.8%) in shipments of industrial and consumer goods. A 10.0% hike in the value of energy products destined for overseas countries was also registered in March.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **Canada-wide, exports dipped 0.7% (*seasonally adjusted*) to $33.5 billion in March.** This decline brought to an end a streak of consecutive increases that lasted six months. This can be largely attributed to a decline in the value of energy exports (-6.6%), which, in turn, was driven by a substantial drop in energy prices.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Manufacturing sales in British Columbia advanced 3.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March.** A double-digit jump in transportation equipment (+24.4%) as well as increased shipments from food (+4.3%) and paper (+7.2%) manufacturers were responsible for the lion's share of the overall expansion. Makers of wood products also saw higher sales in April (+3.1%).

  Nationally, manufacturing sales rose 1.2% with food (+3.5%) and motor vehicle manufacturers (+3.6%) providing the largest contributions. Gains were posted in every province ranging from 0.1% in Quebec to 45.0% in Newfoundland and Labrador.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **The number of new motor vehicles sold in British Columbia fell for a fifth straight month, dipping 0.9% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March.**[1] Most provinces registered lower sales during the month with Saskatchewan (-14.1%) and Ontario (-4.2%) posting the most notable declines. Prince Edward Island was the only province where sales increased (+7.6%). Overall, the number of new motor vehicles sold in Canada declined 4.2% in March. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Housing starts in British Columbia climbed 13.7% (*seasonally adjusted*) in April.** Urban starts jumped even higher, up 16.4% compared to the previous month, an increase that virtually matched the substantial decline registered in March. Most of the increase can be credited to a soaring number of new multiple unit projects (+28.3%). Nationally, housing starts were up 1.3% in April. *Data Source: CMHC*

First Quarter in Review

- **British Columbia's manufacturing sector saw sales rise 5.2% (*seasonally adjusted*) during the first quarter of 2010.** This marks a third straight quarterly improvement in the value of

[1] New motor vehicle sales figures for British Columbia also include data for the territories.

Report The Journey from Apprentice to B.C.'s Labour Market: Employment Outcomes of Former Apprenticeship Students

Did you know...

One in six (16%) Canadians know someone who was stranded in Europe as a result of the volcanic eruption in Iceland. *Data Source: Ipsos Reid*

sales. The most significant increases were registered by computer & electronic product (+30.4%), transportation equipment (+16.8%) and wood product (+13.9%) manufacturers, all of which posted double-digit increases over the previous quarter. Nationally, sales rose 3.2% with stronger sales in New Brunswick (+15.9%), Saskatchewan (+7.7%), Alberta (+6.0%) and BC (+5.2%) leading the way.

- **During the first quarter of 2010, new motor vehicle sales dropped 4.9% *(seasonally adjusted)*, the first decline recorded following three consecutive quarterly increases.** Canada-wide, sales were up 3.0% with every province except BC (-4.9%) posting a higher volume of new motor vehicle sales. Newfoundland and Labrador (+10.9%) and Saskatchewan (+10.1%) recorded the largest increases during the quarter.

Internet Usage

- **Roughly 85% of British Columbians were "online" in 2009, an increase of 7 percentage points since 2007.** Compared to other provinces, British Columba, along with Alberta (85%), had the highest rate of Internet usage in Canada, slightly ahead of the national rate (80%).

  Email (93%), general browsing (78%), getting weather reports (75%) and non-health-related research (73%) were among the most popular activities conducted online. Instant messaging via the Internet was the only activity which saw a decline in popularity since 2007, perhaps due to an ongoing surge in cellular-based "texting" services.

  Not surprisingly, younger Canadians (aged 34 years and younger) dominate cyberspace with nearly all (97%) having access to the Internet either at home, work, school or via a public library terminal. However, Canadians aged 35 and over have greatly increased their presence on the Internet since 2007 with a substantial increase (+12 percentage points) in the share of seniors (aged 65 and over) making use of the internet. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Health

- **During the 2007/2008 fiscal year, there were 715 residential care facilities operating in British Columbia serving some 28,803 residents.** Of those facilities, 286 were dedicated nursing homes with another 378 focused on caring for persons with mental disorders[2]. The remaining 51 facilities cared for the physically disabled, delinquents, transients and others. Overall, residential care facilities in BC generated $1.8 billion in revenues and employed the equivalent of 22,869 full-time personnel. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Aboriginal Employment

- **Between 2008 and 2009, the unemployment rate for Canada's Aboriginal workforce living off-reserve rose from 10.4% to 13.9%.** This increase in the unemployment rate was much sharper than for non-Aboriginals whose unemployment rate increased from 6.0% to 8.1%.

  The youth (aged 15 to 24) labour market was most harshly impacted during the downturn. In 2009, while the non-Aboriginal youth employment rate slipped 4.2 percentage points to 55.6%, the employment rate for their Aboriginal counterparts fell 6.8 percentage points to 45.1%.

  Canada's manufacturing industry posted the largest employment losses in 2009. Among non-Aboriginals, manufacturing employment fell 8% (-114,000) while Aboriginal employment in the sector fell 30% (-7,000) with most of those losses found in Western Canada. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

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[2] Mental disorders includes developmental delays, psychiatric disability, substance abuse problems and emotional instability.

For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Infoline Report

Contact: Ian Darling
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originally published in
Earnings and Employment Trends Issue 10-03

The Journey from Apprentice to B.C.'s Labour Market: Employment Outcomes of Former Apprenticeship Students

Introduction

The BC Apprenticeship Student Outcomes (APPSO) Survey is an annual province-wide survey of former apprenticeship students who have completed their final year of apprenticeship training in a participating B.C. post-secondary institution[1]. The 2009 APPSO Survey, conducted in February and March of 2009, interviewed 2,099 former students from 23 different apprenticeship program areas.

This article, which is based on data from the 2009 APPSO Survey, looks at key employment outcomes for former apprenticeship students, including labour force participation, employment, and unemployment rates, wage rates, and the relevance of apprenticeship training to labour market demand.

There are currently more than 100 apprentice trade programs in B.C. leading to a government-recognized credential and employment as a certified tradesperson. For reporting purposes, these trades programs are grouped into program areas according to Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) coding[2].

The survey included students from a number of different program areas. As shown in the following table, the most common program areas among respondents were Electrician (18% of respondents), Carpentry (12%), and Plumbing (11%).

Survey respondents represented a wide range of apprenticeship program areas

Apprenticeship Program Area	% of Total Respondents
Electrician	18%
Carpentry	12%
Plumbing	11%
Exterior & Interior Finishing Trades	7%
Automotive Mechanics	7%
Steel Fabrication & Welding	6%
Pipefitter & Sprinkler Fitter	5%
Heavy Duty Mechanics	5%
Machinist	4%
Industrial Mechanics & Maintenance	4%
Autobody/Collision & Repair	4%
Culinary Arts	4%
Heating, Air Conditioning, Refrigeration	3%
Precision Metal Working	2%
Medium/Heavy Vehicle & Truck Mechanics	2%
Construction Heavy Equipment	2%
Other Programs	5%
Total	100%

How many former apprenticeship students are participating in the labour market?

At the time of the survey, virtually all respondents (97%) were in the labour force—that is, employed or looking for work. This participation rate is extremely high—among demographic groups in B.C. the highest participation rate in 2009 was among men aged 30 to 34 (91.4%), still more than 5 percentage points below that of former apprenticeship students.

[1] For more information about the former students surveyed, refer to the section About the Survey on page 4.

[2] The current classification used at Statistics Canada to classify instructional programs according to field of study.

What is the unemployment rate among former apprenticeship students?

When looking at the unemployment rate of former apprenticeship students, it is important to consider recent changes in B.C.'s labour market. In the latter half of 2008, British Columbia entered an economic slowdown, and labour market conditions began tightening. Between March 2008 and March 2009, there were 83,400 job losses in B.C.[3] Many of these losses (-34,000) were in the construction industry, where approximately half of all employed apprenticeship survey respondents have been working in recent years.

Despite these labour market challenges, the unemployment rate among former apprenticeship students was relatively low (7.8% at the time of the survey). For comparison, in March 2009, the unemployment rate (unadjusted) among B.C.'s population aged 20 to 59 was 7.2%.

At the time of the survey, unemployment rates varied considerably between apprenticeship program areas. Former apprenticeship students from Construction Heavy Equipment (28.1%) and Precision Metal Working (16.7%) programs had the highest unemployment rates, while those who completed Culinary Arts (2.8%), Medium/Heavy Vehicle & Truck Mechanics (2.4%), and Heating, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration (0%) programs boasted the lowest unemployment rates.

Unemployment rates of former apprentices varied across program areas

Apprenticeship Program Area	Unemployment Rate
Heating, Air Conditioning, Refrigeration	0.0%
Medium/Heavy Vehicle & Truck Mechanics	2.4%
Culinary Arts	2.8%
Other Programs	4.0%
Machinist	4.5%
Autobody/Collision & Repair	5.1%
Automotive Mechanics	5.1%
Pipefitter & Sprinkler Fitter	5.5%
Heavy Duty Mechanics	6.3%
Exterior & Interior Finishing Trades	8.0%
Industrial Mechanics & Maintenance	8.9%
Plumbing	9.3%
Steel Fabrication & Welding	9.3%
Electrician	9.6%
Carpentry	9.9%
Precision Metal Working	16.7%
Construction Heavy Equipment	28.1%

How many former apprenticeship students are employed?

A large majority (89%) of former apprenticeship students were employed at the time of the survey. The employment rate was high among most of the program areas, particularly in Heating, Air Conditioning, & Refrigeration (96%) and Autobody/Collision Repair programs (95%), although some programs had a considerably lower rate, such as Precision Metal Working (68%) and Construction Heavy Equipment (64%).

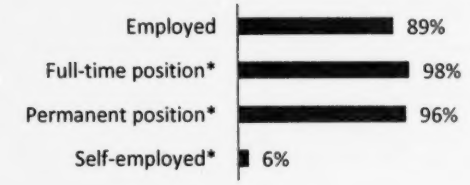
Nearly all employed former apprentices were working full-time[4] (98% of those employed) in a permanent position (96%). Only 6% of employed respondents were self-employed, although this percentage was substantially higher among stu-

[3] Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

[4] Full-time employment is defined as working 30 hours or more per week.

dents who were enrolled in Carpentry (17%) and Pipefitter & Sprinkler Fitter (15%) programs.

Former apprentices were employed in full-time, permanent positions



**Percentages are based on those employed*

What occupations do former apprenticeship students have, and how much do they earn?

More than nine out of ten (91%) of employed respondents reported that their main job was in Trades, Transport, & Equipment Operators & Related Occupations. The second most common occupation category was Sales & Service Occupations, representing 5% of employed respondents[5].

The median hourly wage for all respondents employed at the time of the survey (February/March, 2009) was $29, and has been increasing steadily since 2005—wage figures in previous years were $24 (2005), $25 (2006), $27 (2007), and $28 (2008).

Median hourly wages varied across occupations. Among the most commonly cited occupations in 2009, wages ranged from a low of $17 (Chefs & Cooks and Butchers & Bakers), to a high of $34 (Technical Occupations in Electronics & Electrical Engineering).

[5] The National Occupational Classification (NOC) system was used to assign codes to the occupations former students had at the time of the survey.

Hourly wage of most common occupations, 2009

Occupation*	Median Hourly Wage
Electrical Trades & Telecommunication Occupations	$30
Motor Vehicle Mechanics	$25
Machinery & Transportation Equipment Mechanics	$32
Plumbers, Pipefitters & Gas Fitters	$30
Contractors & Supervisors, Trades & Related	$30
Carpenters & Cabinetmakers	$26
Metal Forming, Shaping & Erecting Occupations	$29
Chefs & Cooks	$17
Masonry & Plastering Trades	$27
Machinists & Related Occupations	$29
Printing Press operators, Commercial Divers & Other Trades & Related Occupations, n.e.c.	$32
Other Construction Trades	$27
Butchers & Bakers	$17
Technical Occupations in Electronics & Electrical Engineering	$34
Other Mechanics	$20

**National Occupational Code - 3-digit level*

Employed respondents who took further studies after completing their apprenticeship training had a slightly higher median hourly wage than those who did not ($30 vs. $29).

Despite the economic slowdown that began in British Columbia in the latter half of 2008, the median hourly wage rate among the overall B.C. population increased from $19 in March 2008 to $20 in March 2009 (unadjusted). Among former apprenticeship students, the results were similar. As shown in the following table, the median wage rate in some of the most common occupations of former apprenticeship students increased between 2008 and 2009, and where there were decreases, they were small.

Median hourly wage rates among the most common occupations remained relatively stable between 2008 and 2009

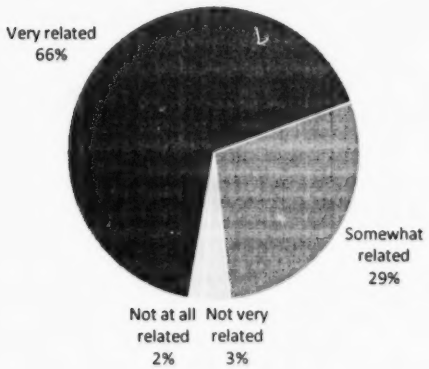
Occupation*	Median Hourly Wage 2008	2009
Electrical Trades & Telecommunication Occupations	$29	$30
Motor Vehicle Mechanics	$24	$25
Machinery & Transportation Equipment Mechanics	$31	$32
Plumbers, Pipefitters & Gas Fitters	$28	$30
Contractors & Supervisors, Trades & Related	$30	$30
Carpenters & Cabinetmakers	$25	$26
Metal Forming, Shaping & Erecting Occs.	$30	$29
Chefs & Cooks	$15	$17

**National Occupational Code - 3-digit level*

How relevant is apprenticeship training to labour market demand?

Generally, former students were employed in jobs relevant to their apprenticeship program, as indicated by their high ratings of the relatedness of in-school training to their current work. Nearly all (95%) who were employed at the time of this survey rated their job as being *very related* or *somewhat related* to their training.

Most employed respondents were in a job related to their apprenticeship training



Often, apprenticeship work placements offer a position to students when they complete their program. In 2009, more than three-quarters (77%) of those employed said that they had completed at least one placement with their current employer.

About the survey

The Apprenticeship Student Outcomes (APPSO) Survey is an annual province-wide survey of former apprenticeship students who have completed their final year of apprenticeship training in a participating B.C. post-secondary institution. The APPSO survey is conducted with funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (ALMD), the British Columbia Industry Training Authority (ITA), and participating British Columbia post-secondary institutions. The British Columbia Outcomes Working Group (OWG) oversees all aspects of the project.

This article is based on data from the 2009 APPSO survey, which contacted 2,099 former apprenticeship students from 27 institutions (14 public and 13 private). Former students were surveyed 9 to 20 months after they completed their programs, and were asked about their in-school training experience, their workplace training experience, and their subsequent employment outcomes and further education.

For more information on the Apprenticeship Student Outcomes Survey, please see: http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Default/Home.aspx

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May , 2010
Iss 10–19

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jan1/2010	% change on one year ago
BC	4,494.2	1.6
Canada	33,930.8	1.2
GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 9)		
(BC - at market prices)	2008	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	197,931	3.3
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	164,520	0.0
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)*	37,529	-1.7
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	25,931	3.2
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Mar 2010	2,994	3.8
Merchandise Exports - Mar 2010	2,290	1.5
Retail Sales - Feb 2010	4,844	0.1
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Mar 2010)	one year ago	% change
BC	0.5	-0.2
Vancouver	0.9	0.0
Victoria	0.4	-0.1
Canada	1.4	0.4
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		
(seasonally adjusted)	Apr 2010	% change on prev. month
Labour Force - BC	2,483	-0.1
Employed - BC	2,303	0.6
Unemployed - BC	181	-7.5
		Mar 2010
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	7.3	7.9
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	8.1	8.2
INTEREST RATES (percent)	May 12/2010	May 13/2009
Prime Business Rate	2.25	2.25
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.70	3.90
- 5 year	6.10	5.25
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	May 12/2010	May 13/2009
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0201	1.1683
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9806	0.8504
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Apr 2010	% change on one year ago
BC	820.44	2.3
Canada	814.38	1.8

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Labour Market Information Gateway

A new gateway with links to labour market information is now available. The labour market information gateway features access to a variety of data sources, articles, and reports containing labour market information for British Columbia in one convenient location.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/lmi_gate.asp

Quarterly Indicators for BC Economy

A new table with data for key quarterly indicators for the BC economy is now available. The table offers a quick look at the quarterly change in selected economic and demographic variables that provide an indication of the strength or weakness of the BC economy.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/qinds.asp

BC's Solid Waste Flow, 2006

This report examines the source and composition of solid waste in British Columbia. Three key sectors are measured: industrial, commercial and institutional (IC&I); construction, renovation and demolition (CR&D); and residential.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/env/SolidWaste06.pdf

Socio-Economic Profiles

The 2009 Socio-Economic Profiles now available. These profiles consist of charts and tables for a number of geographic overlays of BC. Also included are the special geographies of the Georgia, Fraser, and Columbia Basins.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/choose.asp

Released this week by BC Stats

- Business Indicators, April 2010
- Exports, March 2010

Next week

- Consumer Price Index, April 2010
- Quarterly Regional Statistics, 1st Quarter 2010
- Economic Statistics Report, May 2010 (New!)

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